

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 705

To establish the Interagency Council on Meeting the Housing and Service
Needs of Seniors, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 5, 2005

Mr. SARBANES introduced the following bill; which was read twice and
referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To establish the Interagency Council on Meeting the Housing
and Service Needs of Seniors, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Meeting the Housing
5 and Service Needs of Seniors Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The senior population (persons 65 or older)
9 in this country is rapidly growing, and is expected
10 to increase from 34,700,000 in 2000 to nearly

1 40,000,000 by 2010, and then will dramatically in-
2 crease to over 50,000,000 by 2020.

3 (2) By 2020, the population of “older” seniors,
4 those over age 85, is expected to double to
5 7,000,000, and then double again to 14,000,000 by
6 2040.

7 (3) As the senior population increases, so does
8 the need for additional safe, decent, affordable, and
9 suitable housing that meets their unique needs.

10 (4) Due to the health care, transportation, and
11 service needs of seniors, issues of providing suitable
12 and affordable housing opportunities differ signifi-
13 cantly from the housing needs of other families.

14 (5) Seniors need access to a wide array of hous-
15 ing options, such as affordable assisted living, in-
16 home care, supportive or service-enriched housing,
17 and retrofitted homes and apartments to allow sen-
18 iors to age in place and to avoid premature place-
19 ment in institutional settings.

20 (6) While there are many programs in place to
21 assist seniors in finding and affording suitable hous-
22 ing and accessing needed services, these programs
23 are fragmented and spread across many agencies,
24 making it difficult for seniors to access assistance or
25 to receive comprehensive information.

1 (7) Better coordination among Federal agencies
2 is needed, as is better coordination at State and
3 local levels, to ensure that seniors can access govern-
4 ment activities, programs, services, and benefits in
5 an effective and efficient manner.

6 (8) Up to date, accurate, and accessible statis-
7 tics on key characteristics of seniors, including con-
8 ditions, behaviors, and needs, are required to accu-
9 rately identify the housing and service needs of sen-
10 iors.

11 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

12 In this Act:

13 (1) The term “housing” means any form of res-
14 idence, including rental housing, homeownership, as-
15 sisted living, group home, supportive housing ar-
16 rangement, nursing facility, or any other physical lo-
17 cation where a person can live.

18 (2) The term “service” includes transportation,
19 health care, nursing assistance, meal, personal care
20 and chore services, assistance with daily activities,
21 mental health care, physical therapy, case manage-
22 ment, and any other services needed by seniors to
23 allow them to stay in their housing or find alter-
24 native housing that meets their needs.

1 (3) The term “program” includes any Federal
 2 or State program providing income support, health
 3 benefits or other benefits to seniors, housing assist-
 4 ance, mortgages, mortgage or loan insurance or
 5 guarantees, housing counseling, supportive services,
 6 assistance with daily activities, or other assistance
 7 for seniors.

8 (4) The term “Council” means the Interagency
 9 Council on Meeting the Housing and Service Needs
 10 of Seniors.

11 (5) The term “senior” means any individual 65
 12 years of age or older.

13 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON MEETING THE HOUS-**
 14 **ING AND SERVICE NEEDS OF SENIORS.**

15 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the ex-
 16 ecutive branch an independent council to be known as the
 17 Interagency Council on Meeting the Housing and Service
 18 Needs of Seniors.

19 (b) OBJECTIVES.—The objectives of the Council are
 20 as follows:

21 (1) To promote coordination and collaboration
 22 among the Federal departments and agencies in-
 23 volved with housing, health care, and service needs
 24 of seniors in order to better meet the needs of senior
 25 citizens.

1 (2) To identify the unique housing and service
2 needs faced by seniors around the country and to
3 recommend ways that the Federal Government,
4 States, State and local governments, and others can
5 better meet those needs, including how to ensure
6 that seniors can find and afford housing that allows
7 them to access health care, transportation, nursing
8 assistance, and assistance with daily activities where
9 they live or in their communities.

10 (3) To facilitate the aging in place of seniors,
11 by identifying and making available the programs
12 and services necessary to enable seniors to remain in
13 their homes as they age.

14 (4) To improve coordination among the housing
15 and service related programs and services of Federal
16 agencies for seniors and to make recommendations
17 about needed changes with an emphasis on—

18 (A) maximizing the impact of existing pro-
19 grams and services;

20 (B) reducing or eliminating areas of over-
21 lap and duplication in the provision and accessi-
22 bility of such programs and services; and

23 (C) making access to programs and serv-
24 ices easier for seniors around the country.

1 (5) To increase the efficiency and effectiveness
2 of existing housing and service related programs and
3 services which serve seniors.

4 (6) To establish an ongoing system of coordina-
5 tion among and within such agencies or organiza-
6 tions so that the housing and service needs of sen-
7 iors are met in a more efficient manner.

8 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Council shall be composed of
9 the following:

10 (1) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Devel-
11 opment or a designee of the Secretary.

12 (2) The Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
13 ices or a designee of the Secretary.

14 (3) The Secretary of Agriculture or a designee
15 of the Secretary.

16 (4) The Secretary of Transportation or a des-
17 ignee of the Secretary.

18 (5) The Secretary of Labor or a designee of the
19 Secretary.

20 (6) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs or a des-
21 ignee of the Secretary.

22 (7) The Secretary of the Treasury or a designee
23 of the Secretary.

24 (8) The Commissioner of the Social Security
25 Administration or a designee of the Commissioner.

1 (9) The Administrator of the Centers for Medi-
 2 care and Medicaid Services or a designee of the Ad-
 3 ministrator.

4 (10) The Administrator of the Administration
 5 on Aging or a designee of the Administrator.

6 (11) The head (or designee) of any other Fed-
 7 eral agency as the Council considers appropriate.

8 (12) State and local representatives knowledge-
 9 able about the needs of seniors as chosen by the
 10 Council members described in paragraphs (1)
 11 through (11).

12 (d) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Council
 13 shall alternate between the Secretary of Housing and
 14 Urban Development and the Secretary of Health and
 15 Human Services on an annual basis.

16 (e) VICE CHAIR.—Each year, the Council shall elect
 17 a Vice Chair from among its members.

18 (f) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet at the call
 19 of its Chairperson or a majority of its members at any
 20 time, and no less often than quarterly. The Council shall
 21 hold meetings with stakeholders and other interested par-
 22 ties at least twice a year, so that the opinions of such par-
 23 ties can be taken into account and so that outside groups
 24 can learn of the Council's activities and plans.

1 **SEC. 5. FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL.**

2 (a) **RELEVANT ACTIVITIES.**—In carrying out its ob-
3 jectives, the Council shall—

4 (1) review all Federal programs and services
5 that assist seniors in finding, affording, and rehabili-
6 tating housing, including those that assist seniors in
7 accessing health care, transportation, supportive
8 services, and assistance with daily activities, where
9 or close to where seniors live;

10 (2) monitor, evaluate, and recommend improve-
11 ments in existing programs and services adminis-
12 tered, funded, or financed by Federal, State, and
13 local agencies to assist seniors in meeting their hous-
14 ing and service needs and make any recommenda-
15 tions about how agencies can better work to house
16 and serve seniors; and

17 (3) recommend ways—

18 (A) to reduce duplication among programs
19 and services by Federal agencies that assist
20 seniors in meeting their housing and service
21 needs;

22 (B) to ensure collaboration among and
23 within agencies in the provision and availability
24 of programs and services so that seniors are
25 able to easily access needed programs and serv-
26 ices;

1 (C) to work with States to better provide
2 housing and services to seniors by—

3 (i) holding individual meetings with
4 State representatives;

5 (ii) providing ongoing technical assist-
6 ance to States in better meeting the needs
7 of seniors; and

8 (iii) working with States to designate
9 State liaisons to the Council;

10 (D) to identify best practices for programs
11 and services that assist seniors in meeting their
12 housing and service needs, including model—

13 (i) programs linking housing and serv-
14 ices;

15 (ii) financing products offered by gov-
16 ernment, quasi-government, and private
17 sector entities;

18 (iii) land use, zoning, and regulatory
19 practices; and

20 (iv) innovations in technology applica-
21 tions that give seniors access to informa-
22 tion on available services;

23 (E) to collect and disseminate information
24 about seniors and the programs and services

1 available to them to ensure that seniors can ac-
 2 cess comprehensive information;

3 (F) to hold biannual meetings with stake-
 4 holders and other interested parties (or to hold
 5 open Council meetings) to receive input and
 6 ideas about how to best meet the housing and
 7 service needs of seniors;

8 (G) to maintain an updated website of
 9 policies, meetings, best practices, programs,
 10 services, and any other helpful information to
 11 keep people informed of the Council's activities;
 12 and

13 (H) to work with the Federal Interagency
 14 Forum on Aging Statistics, the Census Bureau,
 15 and member agencies to collect and maintain
 16 data relating to the housing and service needs
 17 of seniors so that all data can be accessed in
 18 one place and to identify and address unmet
 19 data needs.

20 (b) REPORTS.—

21 (1) BY MEMBERS.—Each year, the head of each
 22 agency that is a member of the Council shall prepare
 23 and transmit to the Council a report that de-
 24 scribes—

1 (A) each program and service administered
2 by the agency that serves seniors and the num-
3 ber of seniors served by each program or serv-
4 ice, the resources available in each, as well as
5 a breakdown of where each program and service
6 can be accessed;

7 (B) the barriers and impediments, includ-
8 ing statutory or regulatory, to the access and
9 use of such programs and services by seniors;

10 (C) the efforts made by each agency to in-
11 crease opportunities for seniors to find and af-
12 ford housing that meet their needs, including
13 how the agency is working with other agencies
14 to better coordinate programs and services; and

15 (D) any new data collected by each agency
16 relating to the housing and service needs of
17 seniors.

18 (2) BY THE COUNCIL.—Each year, the Council
19 shall prepare and transmit to the President, the
20 Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban
21 Affairs, the Senate Committee on Health, Edu-
22 cation, Labor, and Pensions, the House Financial
23 Services Committee, and the House Committee on
24 Education and the Workforce a report that—

1 (A) summarizes the reports required in
2 paragraph (1);

3 (B) utilizes recent data to assess the na-
4 ture of the problems faced by seniors in meet-
5 ing their unique housing and service needs;

6 (C) provides a comprehensive and detailed
7 description of the programs and services of the
8 Federal Government in meeting the needs and
9 problems described in subparagraph (B);

10 (D) describes the activities and accomplish-
11 ments of the Council in working with Federal,
12 State, and local governments, and private orga-
13 nizations in coordinating programs and services
14 to meet the needs described in subparagraph
15 (B) and the resources available to meet those
16 needs;

17 (E) assesses the level of Federal assistance
18 required to meet the needs described in sub-
19 paragraph (B); and

20 (F) makes recommendations for appro-
21 priate legislative and administrative actions to
22 meet the needs described in subparagraph (B)
23 and for coordinating programs and services de-
24 signed to meet those needs.

1 **SEC. 6. POWERS OF THE COUNCIL.**

2 (a) HEARINGS.—The Council may hold such hear-
3 ings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testi-
4 mony, and receive such evidence as the Council considers
5 advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

6 (b) INFORMATION FROM AGENCIES.—Agencies which
7 are members of the Council shall provide all requested in-
8 formation and data to the Council as requested.

9 (c) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Council may use the
10 United States mails in the same manner and under the
11 same conditions as other departments and agencies of the
12 Federal Government.

13 (d) GIFTS.—The Council may accept, use, and dis-
14 pose of gifts or donations of services or property.

15 **SEC. 7. COUNCIL PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

16 (a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—All members of
17 the Council who are officers or employees of the United
18 States shall serve without compensation in addition to that
19 received for their services as officers or employees of the
20 United States.

21 (b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the Coun-
22 cil shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in
23 lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of
24 agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5,
25 United States Code, while away from their homes or reg-

1 ular places of business in the performance of services for
2 the Council.

3 (c) STAFF.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Council shall, without
5 regard to civil service laws and regulations, appoint
6 and terminate an Executive Director and such other
7 additional personnel as may be necessary to enable
8 the Council to perform its duties.

9 (2) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The Council shall
10 appoint an Executive Director at its initial meeting.
11 The Executive Director shall be compensated at a
12 rate not to exceed the rate of pay payable for level
13 V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of
14 title 5, United States Code.

15 (3) COMPENSATION.—With the approval of the
16 Council, the Executive Director may appoint and fix
17 the compensation of such additional personnel as
18 necessary to carry out the duties of the Council. The
19 rate of compensation may be set without regard to
20 the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter II of
21 chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating
22 to classification of positions and General Schedule
23 pay rates, except that the rate of pay may not ex-
24 ceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive
25 Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

1 (d) TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—In
 2 carrying out its objectives, the Council may procure tem-
 3 porary and intermittent services of consultants and ex-
 4 perts under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code,
 5 at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily
 6 equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for
 7 level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of
 8 such title.

9 (e) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Upon
 10 request of the Council, any Federal Government employee
 11 may be detailed to the Council without reimbursement,
 12 and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of
 13 civil service status or privilege.

14 (f) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Secretary of
 15 Housing Urban Development and the Secretary of Health
 16 and Human Services shall provide the Council with such
 17 administrative and supportive services as are necessary to
 18 ensure that the Council can carry out its functions.

19 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

20 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
 21 this Act, \$1,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through
 22 2010.

